![National Water Quality Monitoring Council — Working together for clean water](logo)

Meeting Minutes – National Water Quality Monitoring Council (Council)
Web Meeting
September 9, 2019

(Agenda and attendance on pages 3-4, presentations posted on Council website at: http://acwi.gov/monitoring/)

Actions, Decisions and other Information

1. Upon a motion duly made (Dave Chestnut), seconded (Nick Martorano), and carried, the July Council Meeting minutes were approved and will be posted on the website

2. **Membership Update**: Gary Rowe discussed that there continue to be no membership updates until the status of ACWI is resolved, hopefully sometime this month (September 2019).

    a. **Advisory Committee on Water Information (ACWI) update**: Gary Rowe reported that there has not been a final decision made for which Federal Advisory Committees will be eliminated under Executive Order. Justification was submitted in July 2019. Executive Order 13875 states that a decision will be made by September 30. Kris will pass on additional information as it is provided to her.

3. **National Monitoring Conference (NMC) update:** Mike McHale stated that he and Lareina Guenzel will be meeting with a group September 17 to discuss timelines and the program development process for the next NMC.

- **Water Information Strategies (WIS) Work Group update**: The WIS met in September for the first time since the spring. Traffic on the Water Quality Portal is increasing considerably (125,000 visitors Oct 1, 2017-Aug31 2018 vs 204,000 visitors Oct 1, 2018-Aug 31, 2019). There is a new cloud version of the WQ. Please test it at https://wqp-test.er.usgs.gov/portal/ and send comments to Jim Kreft (mailto:jkreft@usgs.gov). Mike Higgins will be sending out a scoring matrix to the council with a list of questions, instructions, and products for the Council to score and prioritize. PFAS monitoring has been discussed and Gary Rowe suggested that EPA or USGS could give a PFAS 101 presentation at a future Council meeting.

- **Volunteer Monitoring (VM) Workgroup update:** Julie Vastine reported that VM members gave presentations at the August 8 meeting, which each member discussing a slide about themselves and their work to introduce members to each other (see presentation "Volunteer Monitoring Report"). The VM monitoring is meeting later in September to discuss fact sheets as well as the VM newsletter and website. There are several Webinars set up in the future-Nov 7 VM spotlight on Missouri Stream Team and Nov 19 Macroinvertebrates.org

- **Methods Board update:** Dan Sullivan requested that everyone fill out the Trash Methods survey. Nemi has hired a developer. Sensors Work Group has not been active.

- **National Network of Reference Watersheds Working Group (NNRW):** Mike McHale reported that Funding for the NNRW website has been cut. The database behind the webpage has been ported and the page will likely go down after October 1. Mike suggests that the focus of the workgroup needs to be changed and should be discussed at the October Steering Committee meeting.

- **Collaboration and Outreach Work Group update:** Kris McSwain (for Candice Hopkins) reminded everyone to submit articles for the Newsletter as soon as possible. The newsletter will be sent to editors next week. Submit articles to mailto:NationalMonitoringCouncil@gmail.com.

- **Technical Presentation:** Lori Sprague (USGS) gave a presentation on "A Framework for Interagency Coordination on a National-Fixed Site Water Quality Network" ([See Recommendations](#)). Monitoring organizations face many common water-quality challenges across the United States, leading to unintentional commonalities in their monitoring approaches. These commonalities offer an opportunity to leverage our collective monitoring activities to create a coordinated national fixed-site network for rivers and streams in the United States. This report presents recommendations for establishing a coordinated network of core sites that are sampled over the long term by multiple monitoring organizations using a minimum set of common design elements. These common design elements can be built upon as needed by the originating monitoring organizations to meet additional local needs. Based on lessons learned from past coordination efforts, the initial emphasis of the network is recommended to be on the identification of existing or recently discontinued sites that require no changes or only small changes that organizations can make to ensure overall consistency within the interagency network, without extensive modification to their current monitoring approach and without securing large new sources of funding. A census of currently available nutrient data in the Water Quality Portal shows that 735 sites are already available that meet the recommended minimum sampling elements for a coordinated network for nutrients. Through small changes that build upon the commonalities already in place, an additional 1,917 sites could be available for inclusion in a coordinated network.

- **Technical Presentation:** Jane Caffrey (UWF) gave a presentation on "Consistency in Data Reporting Quality: Recommendations to the National Water Quality Monitoring Council" ([See Metadata Presentation](#)) This presentation focused on how to improve metadata submission to WQX. Metadata in the Water Quality Portal can lack key elements which make the underlying data difficult to use. A key goal of this working group has been to try to identify the best practices for water quality metadata submission. The group consists of members from federal, state, tribes, NGOs and universities. Members believe that it is important to recognize that "One size does not fit all, but *more* metadata makes portal data more valuable and useful for a wider audience" (B. Horn, pers. comm.). Therefore, the group encourages data providers to enhance water quality data submission and potential reuse by including as much metadata as possible. This working group focused on identifying how using recommended or optional WQX web elements could improve data quality. We hope that use of these recommended or optional elements will become the best practice in the future. By providing guidance including specific metadata submission examples, the group believes this will enhance and improve metadata submission to the Water Quality Portal. The working group did not seek to redefine how to create metadata in general or the metadata elements in WQX.

- **Technical Demonstration:** Laura Shumway (USEPA) gave a demonstration using WQP Web Services to support the report "Recommendations for Increasing Submissions to the WQP and Creating Customized Entry Points Using WQP Web Services." Laura discussed that to ensure water-quality data collected in the United States are available in a format consistent with the Water Quality eXchange (WQX) and from a single unified database, the Consistency in Data Discoverability subgroup devised a list of recommendations to increase data sharing and creating customized entry points for displaying water quality data. The recommendations are primarily targeted at staff and implementers at the state, regional, and national level (people with the ability to create, establish and implement these ideas and share them with others).

MEETING AGENDA
Monday, September 9, 2019

Time (EDT)	Topic	Speaker
12:00 PM	Roll Call	Kris McSwain, ACWI DFO
12:05 PM	Introductions	Susan Holdsworth and Gary Rowe
12:10 PM	Approval of July 2019 NWQMC Minutes/ACWI Updates	Kris McSwain, ACWI DFO
12:15 PM	Presentation: A Framework for Interagency Coordination on a National Fixed-Site Water Quality Network	Lori Sprague, USGS and Bryan Rabon, SCDHEC
12:40 PM	Presentation: Consistency in Data Reporting Quality: Recommendations to the National Water Quality Monitoring Council	Jane Caffrey, University of West Florida and Brian Pellerin, USGS
12.:55 PM	Presentation: Recommendations for Increasing Submissions to the WQP and Creating Customized Entry Points Using WQP Web Services	Laura Shumway, USEPA and Roger Stewart, VADEQ
1:10 PM	Discussion and Q&A	Lori Sprague, USGS
1:55 PM	**Break**	
2:05 PM	Update from National Monitoring Conference Planning Committee	Jeff Schloss, Sara Peel, Julie Vastine
2:15 PM	WIS Update	Mary Skopec, Aaron Borisenko
2:25 PM	Volunteer Monitoring Update	Julie Vastine, James Beckley
2:35 PM	Collaboration and Outreach Update	Danielle Donkersloot
2:45 PM	Methods Board and Sensors Work Group Update	Dan Sullivan
2:55 PM	National Network of Reference Watersheds Update	Mike McHale
3:05 PM	Adjourn	Susan Holdsworth and Gary Rowe

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